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Cracks in the Glass Ceiling?

**Diversity and Management in Metro Milwaukee's Private
Industry in the 1990s**

August 13, 2001

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Center for Economic Development

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report was produced at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development (UWMCED), a unit of the College of Letters and Science at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The College established UWMCED in 1990, with the assistance of a grant from the United States Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration's "University Center" program. UWMCED is also one of the core units in the "Consortium for Economic Opportunity," one of the initiatives of the UWM's "Milwaukee Idea." The Center's overriding goal is to contribute to the retention and expansion of Southeastern Wisconsin's employment base by providing university research and technical assistance to community organizations and units of government. The analysis and conclusions presented in this report are solely those of UWMCED and do not necessarily represent the positions of UW-Milwaukee, EDA, or any of the Center's funders.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 1990s, the gender and racial composition of management at metropolitan Milwaukee's largest private-sector employers became much more diverse. At firms covered by the annual Equal Employment Opportunity Commission workforce survey, women and minorities garnered the lion's share of the net new jobs created as "officials and managers" in the region's largest companies during the 1990s. The gains by women were particularly spectacular: over 70 percent of the net new job growth in private-sector officials and managers in metro Milwaukee during the 1990s went to women. All told, women and minorities secured 87 percent of Milwaukee's net new managerial jobs, a rate of growth that exceeded most large metropolitan areas during the decade.

Despite these encouraging trends, the historical legacy of exclusion still weighs heavily on Milwaukee's occupational structure. Milwaukee remained in 1999 near the bottom of U.S. metropolitan areas in the proportion of women and minorities holding managerial jobs in large enterprises (controlling for differences in the size of female and minority labor force). Through 1990, Milwaukee ranked so far behind other metropolitan areas in gender and racial diversity in management that even the substantial progress of the 1990s has only modestly changed our overall ranking. In "cracking the glass ceiling," Milwaukee made laudable progress in the 1990s, but the region still has a long way to go simply to reach the median of major metropolitan areas in the United States.

Cracks in the Glass Ceiling?

Milwaukee's Rank Among the Nation's 50 Largest Metropolitan Areas on UWMCED's "Index of Managerial Diversity"

Category	Milwaukee's 1990 Rank	Milwaukee's 1999 Rank
Women	44	39
Blacks	50	48
Hispanics	37	37

Introduction

Earlier this year, the first round of releases from the U.S. Census Bureau confirmed that Milwaukee became in the 1990s a “majority-minority” city. Non-whites now represent a majority of the city’s population, and political and business leaders alike have hailed the emergence of a “new era” of diversity in the city’s history.

To what extent, however, has diversity grown in the managerial ranks of the Milwaukee economy during the past decade? Metropolitan Milwaukee fully participated in the national economic boom of the 1990s: real aggregate income in the region rose by 23.4% during the decade, and unemployment declined to the lowest levels since the 1960s. Under these conditions of rapid economic growth, to what extent did the ranks of private sector management become more accessible to women and minorities? Compared to the nation’s largest metropolitan areas, how much progress did Milwaukee make during the past decade in “cracking the glass ceiling” that has blocked the mobility of historically “underrepresented” groups to managerial positions in private industry? In short, as Milwaukee emerges as a “majority minority” city, to what extent are women and minorities becoming economic decision-makers in the region?

This report shows that the managerial ranks in the Milwaukee-area’s largest private-sector employers became much more diverse during the 1990s. Women and minorities garnered the lion’s share of the net new jobs as “officials and managers” created in the region’s largest companies during the 1990s. The gains by women were particularly spectacular: over 70 percent of the net new job growth in private-sector officials and managers in metro Milwaukee during the 1990s went to women. By most indicators, Milwaukee ranked near the top of the nation’s 50 largest metropolitan areas in *growth* between 1990-99 in the share of managerial posts held by women and minorities.

On the other hand, despite these encouraging trends, Milwaukee still ranked near the bottom of U.S. metropolitan areas through 1999 in the proportion of women and minorities holding managerial jobs in large enterprises. In 1990, Milwaukee ranked so far behind other metropolitan areas in gender and racial diversity in management that even the substantial progress of the 1990s has only modestly changed our overall ranking. In “cracking the glass ceiling,” Milwaukee made laudable progress in the 1990s, but the region still has a long way to go simply to reach the median of major metropolitan areas in the United States.

Methodology and Definitions

The analysis contained in this report is based on data collected by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Each year, the EEOC collects data on the makeup of the private industry work force for nation's largest metropolitan areas¹, by sex and racial/ethnic categories, published in *Job Patterns for Minorities and Women in Private Industry*. The EEOC data is collected from private employers with: a) 100 or more employees, or b) 50 or more employees *and* federal contracts worth more than \$50,000 or deposits of federal funds of any amount. At the national level, the number of workers covered in EEOC survey typically encompasses about half of all employed workers; in Milwaukee, in 1999, the number of workers in the EEOC survey represented 41 percent of the metropolitan area's employed labor force. The most recently available EEOC data is from the 1999 survey.

EEOC defines "officials and managers" as follows:

Occupations requiring administrative and managerial personnel who set broad policies, exercise overall responsibility for execution of these policies, and direct individual departments or special phases of a firm's operations. Includes: officials, executives, middle management, plant managers, department managers, and superintendents, salaried supervisors who are members of management, purchasing agents and buyers, railroad conductors and yard masters, ship captains, mates, and other officers, farm operators and managers, and kindred workers.

The 1990s: A Decade of Change

Between 1990-1999, the number of officials and managers in metro Milwaukee private-sector firms surveyed by the EEOC grew by 4,432, or 13.9 percent. Table 1 breaks down the managerial employment trends for women and the region's major minority groups –blacks and Hispanics—during the 1990s. Clearly, all "historically disadvantaged" groups witnessed large percentage increases in the number of managers – much higher than the region's overall rate of growth. Table 2 presents aggregate data

for the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas. Managerial employment growth rates for women and minorities in metro Milwaukee exceeded the national rate in the 1990s.

Table 1
Officials and Managers Employed in EEOC-covered
Metropolitan Milwaukee Firms, 1990-1999

Category	1990	1999	% Change
All Employees	32,116	36,579	13.9%
Females	9,018	12,270	36.1%
Blacks (male and female)	895	1,608	79.7%
Hispanics (male and female)	267	578	116.5%

Table 2
Officials and Managers Employed in EEOC-covered firms:
The Nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas, 1990-1999

Category	1990	1999	% Change
All Employees	2,416,029	2,819,959	16.7%
Females	720,345	964,197	33.9%
Blacks (male and female)	143,390	195,005	36.0%
Hispanics (male and female)	82,332	133,320	61.9%

Perhaps the most eye-catching trend found in these numbers is that women accounted for the overwhelming majority of the net growth of private-sector managerial jobs in metro Milwaukee during the 1990s (in the EEOC-covered firms). The total number of managers and officials in metro Milwaukee increased by 4,432 during the 1990s; thus, the net increase of 3,252 female managers during this period means that *women garnered 72.4 percent of the net growth in managerial employment in Milwaukee during the 1990s*. Nationally, women accounted for 60.5 percent of the net managerial job growth in the nation's 50 largest metro areas (taken together). Thus, to an even greater extent than occurred nationally, metro Milwaukee opened up large cracks in the "glass ceiling"

¹ The EEOC collects data from firms in the "Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area" (PMSA). For the Milwaukee-Waukesha PMSA, this includes the following counties: Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Ozaukee.

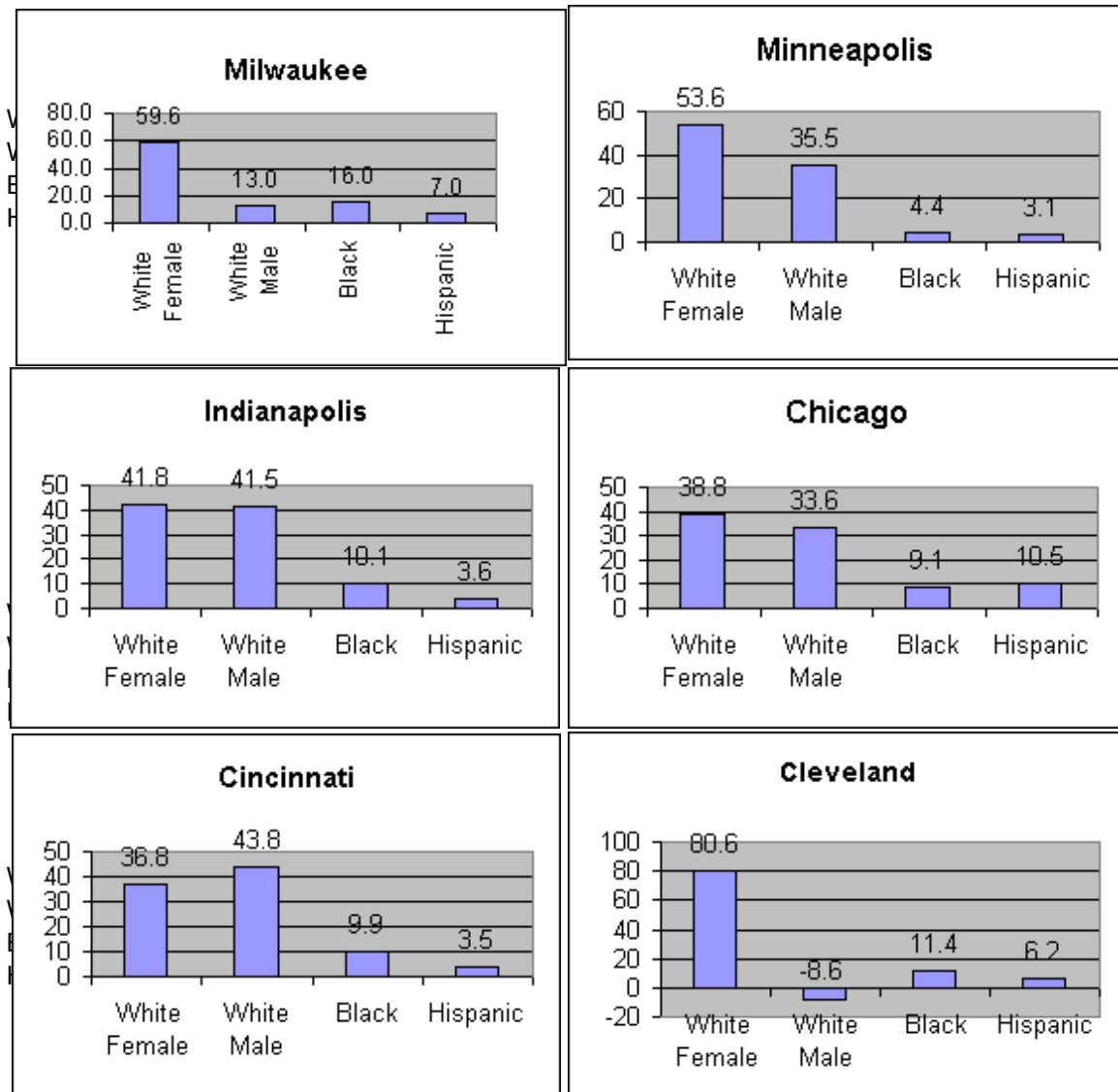
during the 1990s. The decade was marked by striking gains by women in the region's managerial occupations.

Although not as spectacular as the gains scored by women during the 1990s, Blacks and Hispanics also captured a substantial share of the net growth in managerial employment in Milwaukee during the past decade. Blacks took 16 percent of the net managerial job growth during the decade, while Hispanics secured 7 percent of the job growth. In short, women and minorities² combined accounted for 87 percent of the net employment growth in managerial jobs in metro Milwaukee during the 1990s; conversely, white males took only 13 percent of the net increase in managerial employment during the decade. By contrast, when the decade began, white males held over 69 percent of the jobs as "officials and managers" in metro Milwaukee; thus, the 13 percent white male share in the 1990s growth was substantially below the historical trend. As we examine shortly, the gains of women and minorities in the 1990s hardly eradicated the historical legacy of the "glass ceiling;" in 1999, for example, white males still held 62 percent of Greater Milwaukee's private industry managerial positions. Nevertheless, the trends of the 1990s represent a stark departure of historical patterns of gender and racial/ethnic exclusion from managerial jobs in Milwaukee.

Figure 3 provides a sharper view of this historic shift, and places Milwaukee's developments in a comparative perspective. As the figure illustrates, it was white females who were the prime beneficiaries of the changed managerial labor market in metro Milwaukee during the 1990s: almost 60 percent of the net growth in managerial employment during the decade went to white women. Across a sample of Midwest cities included in Figure 3, a similar trend is apparent: white women did very well in gaining managerial employment in the 1990s. Blacks secured 16 percent of the net increase in managerial jobs in Milwaukee (almost evenly divided between males and females), a rate higher than the other Midwest cities. The Hispanic share of managerial employment growth in Milwaukee during the 1990s (7 percent) was exceeded only in Chicago in this sample.

² Including Blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and American Indians.

Figure 3
Cracks in the Glass Ceiling?
Share of net employment growth in managers and officials
In large Midwestern cities, by selected groups, 1990-1999



Milwaukee In Comparative Perspective

In sum, the ranks of the officials and managers in metropolitan Milwaukee became much more diverse during the 1990s, particularly along gender lines. To what extent, however, did the growth of the 1990s change Milwaukee's overall position among the

nation's largest metropolitan areas in minority and female representation in managerial jobs?

To sharpen the analysis, we need to control for differences among metropolitan areas in the number of women and minorities in the overall labor force. For example, blacks made up 30.8 percent of the metro Atlanta employed labor force in 1999, compared to 13.0 percent in metro Milwaukee; thus, all things being equal, in comparing the two communities, we would expect a higher percentage of blacks in management in Atlanta.

A "participation index" would control for these differences by dividing the black percentage of managers and officials by the black percentage of total employment. An index figure of 100 would mean, for example, that if blacks represented 30 percent of a region's labor force, they also represented 30 percent of the region's managers/officials. For example, the participation index for blacks in management for Milwaukee and Atlanta in 1999 was calculated as follows:

Table 3
Calculating the "Participation Index"

Metro Area	Black % of Total Employment: 1999	Black % of Officials and Managers: 1999	Participation Index
Atlanta	30.8	14.1	45.8
Milwaukee	13.0	4.4	33.8

Clearly, even when controlling for differences in size of the black labor force, African Americans are represented in managerial jobs in metropolitan Atlanta to a much greater degree than in metro Milwaukee.

Tables 4-9 present data on the "management participation index" for the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas in 1990 and 1999³. The key findings for Milwaukee's historically disadvantaged groups:

Blacks: Milwaukee ranked last among the nation's largest metropolitan areas in 1990 in black participation in management, when controlling for differences in the size of the black labor force. By 1999, despite the progress of the 1990s, Milwaukee's rank had risen

³ Because of inexplicable idiosyncrasies in 1990 data for Columbus and 1999 data for Pittsburgh, data from 1991 have been used for Columbus, and 1998 for Pittsburgh.

only to 48th of the 50 largest metro areas. The rate of increase in Milwaukee's participation index for blacks during the 1990s was quite rapid (31.8 percent, ranking second among metro areas). However, Milwaukee started from such a low point in 1990 that even the positive trends of the 1990s had only a modest impact on the rankings. However, Milwaukee did inch closer to the national median on this indicator.

Table 4
Management Participation Index for Blacks, 1990

Rank	Metro Area	Index	Rank	Metro Area	Index
1	Salt Lake City	63.6	26	Atlanta	39.0
2	Riverside	58.3	27	Fort Worth	38.8
3	San Francisco	57.3	28	Philadelphia	38.6
4	Los Angeles	55.9	29	Norfolk	38.2
5	San Jose	55.3	30	Pittsburgh	37.5
6	Phoenix	53.8	31	Indianapolis	37.5
7	San Antonio	49.3	32	Providence	37.0
8	Denver	49.2	33	Cleveland	36.7
9	Sacramento	48.5	34	Nassau-Suffolk	36.7
10	Portland	48.4	35	Orlando	36.3
11	Seattle	47.7	36	Houston	36.3
12	San Diego	47.7	37	Dallas	35.8
13	Oakland	46.5	38	Boston	35.7
14	Washington D.C.	46.4	39	Tampa Bay	34.8
15	Middlesex	46.2	40	Baltimore	34.8
16	Detroit	44.8	41	Charlotte	34.1
17	Columbus	43.9	42	Hartford	34.0
18	Cincinnati	42.7	43	Memphis	34.0
19	Minneapolis	41.2	44	Bergen-Passaic	33.9
20	Miami	41.1	45	Fort Lauderdale	33.8
21	Chicago	40.0	46	St. Louis	33.8
22	Kansas City	39.8	47	Buffalo	33.0
23	New York	39.3	48	Greensboro	32.7
24	New Orleans	39.1	49	Rochester	31.1
25	Newark	39.0	50	Milwaukee	25.7
				MEDIAN	39.0

Table 5
Management Participation Index for Blacks, 1999

Rank	Metro Area	Index	Rank	Metro Area	Index
1	Phoenix	69.4	26	Indianapolis	43.0
2	Riverside	68.2	27	Norfolk	42.6
3	San Jose	61.4	28	New Orleans	42.2
4	Tampa Bay	61.2	29	Memphis	42.2
5	Los Angeles	60.9	30	New York	41.8
6	Salt Lake City	60.0	31	Houston	41.3
7	San Diego	57.6	32	Charlotte	40.2
8	San Antonio	57.0	33	Kansas City	40.0
9	Sacramento	55.4	34	Baltimore	39.7
10	San Francisco	54.7	35	Providence	39.6
11	Oakland	53.7	36	Bergen-Passaic	39.3
12	Denver	53.6	37	Minneapolis	38.6
13	Portland	50.0	38	Greensboro	38.5
14	Seattle	48.1	39	Pittsburgh	38.1
15	Washington D.C.	47.9	40	Philadelphia	37.9
16	Middlesex	46.0	41	Boston	37.1
17	Atlanta	45.8	42	Rochester	36.5
18	Cincinnati	45.6	43	Newark	36.5
19	Chicago	45.2	44	Nassau-Suffolk	35.6
20	Orlando	44.8	45	Cleveland	35.4
21	Dallas	43.9	46	Fort Lauderdale	35.1
22	Columbus	43.8	47	St. Louis	34.8
23	Detroit	43.8	48	Milwaukee	33.8
24	Miami	43.6	49	Hartford	33.0
25	Fort Worth	43.5	50	Buffalo	31.9
				MEDIAN	43.2

Women: Milwaukee ranked 44th among the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas in 1990 in female participation in management, when controlling for differences in the size of the women's labor force. By 1999, Milwaukee's rank had risen to 39th. Although Milwaukee ranks toward the bottom of metro areas, the gap between Milwaukee and the "middle of the pack" of U.S. metropolitan areas is rather small on this indicator.

Table 6
Management Participation Index for Women, 1990

Rank	Metro Area	Index	Rank	Metro Area	Index
1	San Francisco	76.2	26	Newark	63.4
2	Oakland	71.8	27	Norfolk	62.7
3	Miami	71.7	28	Fort Worth	61.4
4	Los Angeles	71.6	29	Pittsburgh	61.4
5	Seattle	71.1	30	St. Louis	61.1
6	Sacramento	70.6	31	Indianapolis	60.8
7	Portland	70.3	32	Philadelphia	60.6
8	Denver	70.0	33	Orlando	60.4
9	San Diego	69.9	34	Hartford	60.3
10	New York	69.7	35	Buffalo	60.2
11	Phoenix	69.2	36	Minneapolis	60.0
12	Fort Lauderdale	69.1	37	Bergen-Passaic	59.7
13	Washington D.C.	68.9	38	Detroit	59.4
14	Middlesex	66.8	39	Cincinnati	59.1
15	Atlanta	65.9	40	Houston	59.0
16	San Antonio	65.8	41	New Orleans	58.6
17	Columbus	65.7	42	Nassau-Suffolk	58.6
18	Dallas	65.3	43	Memphis	58.6
19	Boston	64.6	44	Milwaukee	57.7
20	Riverside	64.5	45	Providence	57.5
21	Chicago	64.1	46	Rochester	56.0
22	San Jose	64.1	47	Cleveland	56.0
23	Baltimore	63.9	48	Salt Lake City	54.0
24	Tampa Bay	63.9	49	Greensboro	53.7
25	Kansas City	63.5	50	Charlotte	51.6
				MEDIAN	63.4

Table 7
Management Participation Index for Women, 1999

Rank	Metro Area	Index	Rank	Metro Area	Index
1	San Francisco	87.7	26	Orlando	71.4
2	Denver	82.4	27	Baltimore	71.2
3	Seattle	81.5	28	Riverside	71.1
4	Oakland	80.6	29	San Jose	71.0
5	Los Angeles	79.8	30	Boston	70.5
6	Miami	79.5	31	St. Louis	70.3
7	New York	79.2	32	Hartford	70.1
8	Phoenix	77.7	33	Fort Worth	69.7
9	Sacramento	77.2	34	Buffalo	69.6
10	San Diego	76.2	35	Rochester	69.5
11	Portland	75.9	36	Bergen-Passaic	69.4
12	Washington D.C.	75.7	37	Memphis	69.2
13	Middlesex	74.2	38	Indianapolis	68.8
14	Fort Lauderdale	74.1	39	Milwaukee	67.8
15	San Antonio	73.8	40	Greensboro	67.7
16	Minneapolis	73.7	41	Charlotte	67.6
17	Atlanta	73.2	42	Pittsburgh	67.5
18	Dallas	72.9	43	Salt Lake City	66.9
19	Tampa Bay	72.7	44	Norfolk	66.7
20	Kansas City	72.6	45	Houston	65.6
21	Nassau-Suffolk	72.2	46	New Orleans	65.1
22	Newark	71.8	47	Cincinnati	65.0
23	Columbus	71.8	48	Providence	64.9
24	Chicago	71.6	49	Detroit	64.9
25	Philadelphia	71.4	50	Cleveland	63.4
				MEDIAN	74.2

Hispanics: Milwaukee ranked 37th among the 50 largest metropolitan areas in 1990 in the Hispanic management participation index; in 1999, it again ranked 37th.⁴

⁴ Extreme caution should be used in interpreting the Hispanic index. There were wild fluctuations between 1990-99 for certain metropolitan areas –such as Baltimore, Charlotte, Greensboro, and Indianapolis—that suggest anomalies in the data rather than (necessarily) clear trends. In addition, the calculation of the index was undoubtedly affected –and perhaps distorted by the surging Hispanic population in many cities (such as Milwaukee) during the 1990s. This had the effect of lowering the management participation index, even as the number of Hispanic managers was increasing, because the number of Hispanics in the labor force in many regions rose even more rapidly than the number of Hispanic managers.

Table 8
Management Participation Index for Hispanics, 1990

Rank	Metro Area	Index	Rank	Metro Area	Index
1	Pittsburgh	98.9	26	San Francisco	43.8
2	Greensboro	97.8	27	Riverside	41.8
3	Cincinnati	94.4	28	Philadelphia	41.7
4	St. Louis	92.9	29	Salt Lake City	41.5
5	Baltimore	80.0	30	Phoenix	41.4
6	Memphis	80.0	31	Denver	40.2
7	New Orleans	73.5	32	Portland	39.3
8	Indianapolis	71.4	33	San Jose	38.5
9	Miami	67.9	34	Los Angeles	38.1
10	Detroit	64.3	35	New York	37.8
11	Norfolk	63.6	36	Orlando	37.8
12	Charlotte	62.5	37	Milwaukee	36.4
13	Columbus	60.0	38	Houston	35.9
14	Seattle	59.1	39	Rochester	35.0
15	Atlanta	58.8	40	Nassau-Suffolk	34.6
16	Fort Lauderdale	57.6	41	Dallas	34.0
17	Tampa Bay	56.7	42	Newark	32.9
18	Buffalo	53.8	43	Washington D.C.	32.7
19	Minneapolis	50.0	44	Fort Worth	32.3
20	San Antonio	49.2	45	Middlesex	32.0
21	Kansas City	48.1	46	Bergen-Passaic	29.1
22	Sacramento	46.9	47	Chicago	26.5
23	Oakland	45.5	48	Boston	26.5
24	San Diego	44.2	49	Hartford	24.5
25	Cleveland	43.8	50	Providence	15.9
				MEDIAN	43.8

Table 9
Management Participation Index for Hispanics, 1999

Rank	Metro Area	Index	Rank	Metro Area	Index
1	Cincinnati	90.9	26	San Francisco	40.0
2	Tampa Bay	82.0	27	Atlanta	39.6
3	Miami	76.0	28	Houston	39.2
4	New Orleans	75.7	29	Fort Worth	38.9
5	St. Louis	73.3	30	Philadelphia	38.5
6	Fort Lauderdale	67.5	31	Cleveland	38.5
7	Pittsburgh	66.7	32	Kansas City	38.3
8	Detroit	63.6	33	Orlando	38.0
9	Memphis	62.5	34	Washington D.C.	37.1
10	Buffalo	58.8	35	Salt Lake City	36.2
11	Norfolk	57.1	36	Newark	36.0
12	Sacramento	54.5	37	Milwaukee	34.8
13	San Antonio	52.8	38	Dallas	34.8
14	Riverside	50.4	39	Minneapolis	34.3
15	Baltimore	50.0	40	Nassau-Suffolk	33.9
16	Columbus	50.0	41	Middlesex	33.3
17	Seattle	47.7	42	San Jose	32.3
18	Oakland	44.9	43	Portland	31.7
19	New York	42.6	44	Chicago	29.6
20	San Diego	41.9	45	Bergen-Passaic	28.5
21	Denver	41.6	46	Boston	28.1
22	Los Angeles	41.5	47	Charlotte	27.8
23	Indianapolis	40.7	48	Greensboro	27.5
24	Rochester	40.6	49	Hartford	25.3
25	Phoenix	40.4	50	Providence	21.3
				MEDIAN	40.2

Conclusions

What conclusions, then, can we draw from data on the racial and gender composition of management in Milwaukee's private industry during the 1990s? Clearly, private-sector management became more diverse in metro Milwaukee between 1990 and 1999: women and minorities garnered the overwhelming majority of the net growth in managerial occupations in firms covered by the EEOC survey (i.e. mid- and large-sized firms). The female share (over 70 percent) of Milwaukee's increase in managers during the 1990s was particularly striking. The historical legacy of exclusion in Milwaukee still weighs

heavily on the region's occupational structure: despite the gains for women and minorities in the 1990s, Milwaukee's overall ranking among the nation's metropolitan 50 largest metropolitan areas on a "managerial diversity index" improved only slightly between 1990-1999.

Nevertheless, the signs of change are unmistakable. If the "glass ceiling" did not break in Milwaukee in the 1990s, it certainly showed signs of cracking—particularly for white women. While a full explanation for these trends will require more exhaustive and extensive analysis, we may hypothesize that a combination of factors contributed to the growing diversity of Milwaukee-area management in the 1990s:

- *Education:* Milwaukee's educational institutions began enrolling and graduating more female and minority students in their business schools. Between 1990-99, for example, females represented 45.6 percent of the undergraduate degrees and 39.3 percent of the MBAs awarded by the UW-Milwaukee School of Business Administration. The number of black graduates with a bachelor's degree in business administration rose from 11 in 1990 to 28 in 2000 (from 2.0 percent of the total, to 4.4 percent).⁵ Moreover, shifts that had occurred earlier—the increasing enrollment of women and minorities in higher education and professional schools generally in the 1970s and 1980s—meant that a more diverse pool of potential managerial talent was in the labor market by the 1990s. This factor, however, still functions as something of a brake on black penetration of Milwaukee-area management: in 1990, for example, Milwaukee had the largest racial gap among large, Midwest-Northeast metropolitan areas in the proportion of the population holding a college degree.⁶
- *Experience:* Employment rates for women, in particular, climbed consistently from the late 1960s through the early 1990s as more and more women entered the labor force. Thus, it is plausible that some of the surge in female managers in Milwaukee-area firms in the 1990s reflects the process of women moving up the occupational ladder in various firms as they have accumulated workplace experience. In the same way that closing the gender "education gap" contributes to closing the gender "managerial gap," so too does closing the workplace "experience gap."

⁵ The number of black MBAs at UWM, however, remained low throughout the 1990s, although the number did increase slightly by the end of the decade (seven blacks received MBAs in 2000, compared to five total between 1990-1994). All told, only 33 blacks received MBAs at UWM in the 1990s, just 1.7 percent of the total awarded during the decade.

⁶ UW-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development, *The Economic State of Milwaukee 1998: The City and the Region*. Unfortunately, the most recent, systematic data on this subject comes from the 1990 census, and the 2000 census results will not be available until late 2002. It will be interesting to see whether the racial gap in college education in Milwaukee began to close in the 1990s, which could explain at least part of the modest gains of metro area blacks in securing managerial posts during the decade.

- *Sectoral Shifts:* Like all metro areas, Milwaukee has experienced a pronounced shift since the 1970s in the sectoral composition of employment: a relative decline in manufacturing and increase in services. This sectoral recomposition of employment has probably improved the overall accessibility of managerial occupations to women. In Milwaukee-area manufacturing firms in the EEOC survey, for example, only 17.0 percent of the “managers and officials” were women; by contrast, in finance, insurance, real estate, and services, women held 49.6 percent of the managerial posts
- *Policy and Leadership:* Improvements in managerial diversity during the 1990s may also be attributable to the impact of policies of equal opportunity and affirmative action in employment, and a more aggressive effort on the part of Milwaukee employers to recruit women and minorities in their hiring. The 1990s brought increasing public attention to Milwaukee’s deep and ongoing racial disparities on numerous indicators of economic well-being. Numerous local organizations—such as the Business Council and the Leadership Forum—worked hard to nurture the growth of black managers and professionals in Greater Milwaukee, and the city’s business establishment increasingly embraced efforts to promote employment diversity.

Despite the encouraging trends of the 1990s, we should not overstate the presence of minorities and women in Milwaukee-area management. As we have seen, Milwaukee still ranks below the national median in the degree of diversity in the region’s managerial ranks. In addition, the EEOC data don’t tell us what *kinds* of private industry managerial jobs women and minorities in metropolitan areas have secured. Are historically disadvantaged groups clustered in certain occupations – heads of human resources or managers of the firm’s secretarial staff, for example—or has diversity spread across managerial posts in Milwaukee’s largest firms? Aside from impressionistic or anecdotal evidence, we don’t have systematic data on the extent to which women and minorities have penetrated the upper echelons of corporate Milwaukee’s management. Finally, it is important to again emphasize the limits of the EEOC data: in Milwaukee, they cover just over 41 percent of the employed labor force. To what extent, for example, have smaller business not covered by the EEOC survey also seen their managerial ranks open to historically excluded groups?

Nevertheless, for a region that has received a seemingly endless stream of bad news on issues of racial and social inequality since the late 1980s, this report offers Milwaukee some grounds for optimism. We do not know how secure the new diversity in Milwaukee-area management might be: whether the end of the 90s boom will stall or even reverse the gains of the past decade. But, from a dismal starting point in 1990,

Milwaukee has made some real progress in eliminating the glass ceiling that has historically excluded women and minorities from the ranks of private-sector management.

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